

THE REFORMER.

Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth.—*Jeremiah, v. 1.*

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[We insert the following article from a late paper on account of its singularity. The religious experience of one denomin- ated a heathen, is something not often to be met with in Christian countries, how- ever common it may be in others. Sincer- ity and superstition are strikingly blended together in this relation, and we may realize, in perusing it, the great advantage of having for our guide the precepts of divine revelation.]

The Religious Experience of a Chinese author about A. D. 1789:

Editor of a work entitled, “The Record of a Believing Heart;” published in the north of the Empire.

“ Heretofore, when I have read the Sacred Writings concerning rewards and punishments, with the examples given, in order to show that blessings result from virtue, and calamities from vice, there was always a mixture of doubt and belief. What I believed was the principle of reason—what I doubted was speedy retribution.

“ Afterwards I read Auenleaoufan on the subject of fate, and man’s being able to form his own destiny; and recollecting that he was a celebrated scholar of the Light-of-Nature school, not likely to give a false account of his experience, I was led to believe the doctrine, and desired to essay its efficacy. I further reflected on my past life, and perceived that my transgres- sions and errors had been many, and that I had indulged in irregular pas- sions till they seemed natural; and therefore, if I would reform and follow virtue, it would be absolutely necessary at first to exert great resolutions and strenuous efforts. To keep the heart every moment attentive to every word and every action, and every hour

to examine every thought and every motive, I saw it would be necessary to exercise a hundred forms of restraint, and rouse the whole energies of the divine mind, ere my foot could stand so firm that I should not again stumble. But there were nine hundred and ninety-nine chances to one that my demerits (according to the scale which our moralists give) would exceed my meritorious deeds; in which case all my labor would be in vain, and therefore I became remiss and discouraged and did not act with zeal.

“ However, in the winter of this year I read two other treatises, from which I saw that the reformation of trespasses and pursuing of virtue were attended with a recompense as speedily as the shadow follows the substance; and the blessings and emoluments con- ferred are brought about where before there was complete destitution. In consequence of this, ere I was aware, I profoundly believed the words, and with joy and delight complied; and from that time I daily read the various sacred books on rewards and punishments, and found the doctrine of making amends for faults maintained.

“ One writer says, ‘Calamities or blessings are by man self-induced; and also induced by self-conversion. When the thoughts are converted, former crimes may be dissipated, and the root of virtue nourished.’

“ The Budh doctrine says, ‘Lay down the butcher’s knife, and on that very spot you will become a Budh.’ (The meaning of this is, cease to de- stroy animal life and you will become a Budh, i. e. a divine person.)

“ In another work that I have seen, it is stated that two great robbers were, in the latter years of their lives, con-

verted and repented. By this I was suddenly awakened, and said, 'Although heretofore I have committed many transgressions, I certainly have not sinned so deeply as a great robber.'

"And the Budh priest, Yun-kuh, said to Yuen-kung, one of the robbers, 'For the time past, let every thing be as if you had yesterday died; and for the time to come let every thing be as if you should to-day begin to live.'

"I am now forty years of age, and in this respect am better circumstanced than Ya-kung, who was forty-seven, when, on the last day of the year, he was admonished by the fire-side god, and who, on the first day of his forty-eighth year, commenced bitter repentance and reformation, which, in five or six years' time, procured him promotion to the highest literary rank.

"In prosecution of these thoughts and sentiments, and in imitation of Yuen-kung and Ya-kung, I took the sins of my past life, and, in three written documents, disclosed them fully, and with prayers presented one to heaven and earth, one to the household god, and one to the domestic fire god, swearing and vowing to repent bitterly, and reform my past errors, and strenuously practice virtue. I prayed for my mother's longevity and for my own fame and emolument; and every day I vigorously recited the several sacred books of Taeshangwante, the Poosapanjo of Budh, the prayers to Ursa Major, and prayers to the four greatly honoured personages in heaven. I recited the holy titles of Wante, and the scale of virtues and vices. I did not shun the suspicions and doubts of others, nor dreaded the accusation of vastness and extravagance; if people laughed at me, or blamed me, I made a point of cherishing towards the sacred books more reverence and respect, truth and sincerity. When vicious thoughts began to germinate, I cut them off and exterminated them; and when virtuous thoughts arose, I was sure to carry them into effect.

"In this manner I proceeded till the last day of the Keawoo year, when it was intimated to me by several dreams, that my mother's life would be protracted, and my own promotion and emoluments would be granted, which things from danger attained security; from non-existence began to be: and I then knew that a little petty portion of sincerity was sufficient to change one's fate and one's fortunes, and that the things declared by Yuen-kung, and by the domestic fire god, and by the invisibly moved pencil of Tekeun, were all perfectly true, and the principles infinitely correct; and the doctrine of rewards and punishments, as stated in various sacred books, was the very truth unmixed with falsehood," &c.

The invisibly moved pencil, called Keang, wanke, "the descending divine bird's record," is a large pencil suspended over a tablet, covered with sand, which is watched by some venerable sire of the Taon sect. The worshipper recites a mental prayer, and asks for the solution of some doubt, or ease of conscience; after which the pencil, self-moved, writes a response, by characters drawn on the sand. In consequence of this imposture having been turned to political purposes by factious leaders, it is now prohibited by the laws of China.

Our author recited the several books till he remembered them perfectly, and repeated them not less, he says, than several hundred times. And as to greatly meritorious deeds, he had it not in his power to do them, and even common-place acts of goodness, although he had the desire, he had not always the ability. But such as concealing people's faults and publishing their excellencies, exhorting to virtue and deterring from vice; arranging the affairs of the embarrassed, and righting the ravelled; all the virtues of the month, or benevolent deeds that speech can effect; also cutting down weeds that obstructed paths; removing rubbish that impeded roads; loosing nets and letting animals escape alive; sa-

ving insects that rush to lighted tapers; rescuing ants that were thrown into the water; and other acts of benevolence that the hand could do, were those which, with a believing heart, he practised, not bearing to weary in the doing of them. All these were deeds of benevolence which did not require the spending of money. He also performed some that were attended with a degree of expense. "To the thirsty," says he, "I gave a cup of water; to the hungry I gave a bowl of rice; to the old and the infirm and the maimed I gave from one to several wan; (a wan is less than half a farthing;) to the sick and dying, to widows and orphans and the destitute, I gave assistance to the amount of a hundred wan, or several hundred wan. My benevolent deeds of the mouth and of the hand were rather numerous; and in those cases that the creation of happiness required the parting with much property, perhaps to the amount of ten or twenty thousand wan, I exhorted the public to make a general subscription. In upwards of a thousand cases, I gave of my own property to the amount of one or several wan; and in several scores of cases I gave a few hundred wan; altogether I spent several thousand wan. But whether the deeds of benevolence were effected with or without money, I performed them zealously, and in all cases with a degree of sincerity, and with a heart that forgot all distinction between other men, other creatures, and myself, without seeking favour, and without the hope of reward. And thus carefully practising a little sincerity, I had to be thankful to High Heaven's gracious assistance. From these circumstances may be known the propriety of what the Emperor Chaouletee, of the Han dynasty said:

"Don't, because some virtues are small, neglect them;" and

"Don't, because some vices are thought little, commit them."

And the Shooing Sacred Book says,

"On virtuous doers will be conferred a hundred blessings."

CRIMES IN FRANCE AND ENGLAND.

The number of persons charged with criminal offences in France, in the year 1826, was according to official records, 7,591. The number in England and Wales, in the same year, was 16,147. The population of France is, in round numbers, thirty-one millions; of England and Wales, fourteen millions; 1200 were condemned to death in England; 150 in France. There was a gradual increase of crime in both countries.—*Late paper.*

[*From a London Paper.*]

Increase of Crime.—In June, 1779, the number of persons sentenced at the Old Bailey sessions, was only 40. The number committed to Newgate for trial in 1806, was 899; ten years after, it amounted to 1501; and we believe the number has since continued increasing in nearly the same proportion. In the twenty-one years from 1804 to 1825, it was found that crime had increased in England and Wales at the rate of 213 per cent. The number of persons convicted in 1806 was 2515; in 1825 it was 9664.

Old Bailey Sessions.—More than 500 prisoners were tried at the Old Bailey sessions, which concluded on Friday, June 8. Of these, by far the greater part were convicted; as 266 received sentence on that day, exclusive of those whose sentences were announced immediately after their trial. When it is considered that the whole of these offenders were collected in London and Middlesex in the short space of *six weeks*; besides the army of culprits caught in that part of the suburbs of the metropolis which is in Surrey; that during that time also a vast number of persons have been convicted of minor offences before the magistrates;—what a dreadful picture is afforded of the state of crime in London and its vicinity! Nor is it the least appalling feature of the case, that four-fifths of the unhappy culprits are very young in years, though of long ex-

perience in crime: nay, that a great part of them are mere boys and girls.

[What are the Sunday School, Tract, and Missionary Societies (so numerous in London) doing in the midst of this great *increase of crime*. There seems plenty of work for the Missionaries at home if they are able to make people any better—and if they are not, it is a pity they should put persons to the expense of sending them thousands of miles distant, where they will be far less likely to be of any benefit.]

[From the N. Y. *Telescope*.]

ASCENDENCY OF PRIESTCRAFT.

Lansingburgh, N. Y. 9mo. 3, 1827.

Respected Friend,—“The ‘Telescope’ of 4th ult. the second No. of the paper that I have seen, was yesterday sent me, by a neighbor, for perusal. Until last week, I had no knowledge of the existence of such a publication, and therefore feel the more pleasure in expressing my satisfaction in seeing it.

As I was, so far as I know, the first person in the United States, publicly to call attention to the dangerous schemes of the hierarchs, I rejoice in the present progress of the alarm, and what it is producing.

Perhaps, on the whole, it is better for the present, to consign the hierarchs to the care of such periodicals as the Reformer, the Telescope, &c. The cause of virtue, of truth, reason, of morality no less than religion, require that these schemers should be well and vigilantly watched. You are on the right track, and I hope, not only that you will all pursue it, but that many others will come to your aid, put down the ascendancy of priestcraft, disrobe the hypocrites, and help toward making religion, and the revelations from heaven, what they were designed to be, a blessing, and not a curse to man. Of all men they least love, or reverence, truth, but most hate, and persecute it. Saying this, however, I say it with some exceptions, all that is necessary, and there are honorable exceptions. As a craft, or profession of men, they love truth less than any other, and that from causes perfectly natural, clear to every

sound minded and enlightened man. The religion of the day is not Christianity. Some, and a good many, among the laity, are better than their religion, or their religious leaders: were it not so, the Lord have mercy on Christendom!

I may possibly, occasionally find time to send a short article for the “Telescope,” but, whether or not, it will afford me much satisfaction to see it pursued ably, tearing off the scales from the eyes of the wilfully blind, and affording light for such as desire to see the truth.

Yours, respectfully,
HORATIO GATES SPAFFORD.

For the *Reformer*.

Mr. Editor,—I have frequently perused with much satisfaction and interest the pages of your useful periodical, called the “Reformer;” and am convinced that it will have a powerful effect in checking the alarming growth of an already obnoxious power, which the priests of this country are striving to increase. As often as I reflect on this subject, I feel more and more solicitous that the press should be used as a powerful and wholesome weapon against the dangerous inroads which they would fain make upon our liberties. Every one who has at all watched the course which priests have taken, must feel his fears awakened at the overweening zeal for power and riches manifested by this money-thirsty race of men. Under the popular and pseudo-pretence of making the whole world christians, they are putting in requisition all the means within the grasp of their power to acquire an ascendancy in our legislative councils; the obvious end of which would be, to incorporate rules of religious faith with our laws. I am far from believing that there are not those among the most ignorant of such as hold subordinate stations in the missionary ranks, whose motives are pure, and who honestly believe they are engaged in the work of Heaven; nor would I charge any

man with corrupt, sinister views, who has not laid himself liable to that imputation. But to every reflecting mind, it must be quite apparent that the great aim of the prime movers of these schemes, is the acquisition of power and of wealth; this is their darling object, and on it they keep a single eye. It seems they have made vast improvements upon the method of promulgating the christian religion, as recommended in the New Testament; and, instead of its being made known throughout every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, without money and without price, it is now promulgated with much money and at an exorbitant price. Vast sums of money must be extorted from the honest and unsuspecting to educate "pious young men;" and when their heads are sufficiently stored with certain prescribed sectarian dogmas, they must wend their ways hither and thither, taking heed for the morrow, by being previously loaded with a superabundance of the fat things of this life. Although the popular cry of christianising the whole world, may be an argument quite convenient for these power-thirsty aspirants to use, in making dupes of the unwary and ignorant, still it is most ardently to be desired—so long as we regard the blessings of freedom of thought and of action in all matters between our Maker and our hearts—so long as we esteem those sacred and inestimable privileges which we now enjoy—so long as we believe, as did the immortal Jefferson, "that no race of men are born ready booted and spurred in order to ride us legitimately by the grace of God"—that there will be those who are ready to proclaim to the world, through the medium of an unshackled press, the *real* motives of these noisy aspirants.

It is only by an exposition of the designs of an ambitious priesthood, that the eyes of the public can be opened to their errors, and the purses of the unsuspecting poor and the over credulous rich, closed to the various

means now using to draw from them a goodly portion of the mammon of unrighteousness. For no path is too groveling for modern priests, and no artifice too mean for their embrace, in sponging from the pockets of the honest that dross of the world which they so much admire. The names of the donors are published to the world, and they are taught to believe that it is a *duty* to give, and thus their vanity and superstition are made subservient to the purposes of these indolent beggars. They must have a share of the money which the industrious and plodding labourer has earned by the sweat of his brow, to educate "pious young men" for the ministry, some of whose capacities are much better adapted by nature for the plough and the hoe—for the healthful exercise of tilling the earth, than for expounding the mysteries of theology from the richly ornamented desk. What figure more ridiculous can we behold than one of these newly-ground Reverends, richly enrobed in his sable garb, leaning over a silk velvet cushion, with his gold watch chain dangling from his sob, imposing upon the good sense of his congregation, by vainly attempting to make a display of oratory, when his capital of sense, with which nature had supplied him, was insufficient to effect his object.

Do not these reverend gentlemen, who are so averse to labor, invariably live in ease? Does not the history of priests furnish us with abundant evidence that when they have obtained power they have used it improperly? That when they have had an opportunity to roll in luxury by oppressing the poor with taxes, they have always embraced it? Then why will men open their purses for such purposes? In almost every city, town, and village in the United States, a very great deference is paid to ministers; and the influence which this class of men possess, is already sufficiently extensive for our welfare. May the day when they shall have the weight of the law

in their favour, be as far removed from the present time, as the zenith is from the nadir. **RELIGIOUS LIBERTY.**

A true description of Missionary and Orthodox Preaching.

“They used all the force and skill of their industry to raise the people into heats, by passionate and affecting discourses, that both inflamed a blind devotion and *drew money*. But there was not that pains taken to inform the people of the hatefulness of vice, and the excellency of holiness, or the wonderful love of Christ, by which men might be engaged to acknowledge and obey him. And the design of their sermons was rather to raise a present heat, *which they knew afterwards how to manage*, than to work a real reformation on their hearers. They had also intermixed with all divine truth so many fables, that they were become very extravagant; and that alloy had so debased the whole, that there was great need of a good discerning to deliver people from those prejudices which these ministers brought upon the whole christian doctrine.”

Reader, to what do you suppose the foregoing extract alludes? ‘Why,’ say you, ‘to our Missionary and orthodox preaching.’ No,—gentle reader, it is Bishop Burnet’s account, published above a hundred years ago, of the preaching of the Roman Catholic Friars in England, just before the reformation began. (Burnet’s Hist. of the Reformation, Vol. i. p. 302.) This was the kind of preaching which, by the abominations which it introduced, roused the early Reformers to their arduous and glorious undertaking; and this is the kind of preaching which now equally requires correction.—*Can ye not discern the signs of the times.*

Uni. Mag.

[The following article furnishes another striking evidence, if any further evidence were wanting, of the present state of the religious world. What an exhibition is

here given of Christianity? And what a condition professing christians of this day are in to spread the Gospel among the heathen?]

[*From the Columbian Star.*]

ENGLAND.

What follows is a brief account of some of the charitable amusements in Liverpool. Beauty, fashion, music, balls, and the *expense of many thousands* sterling, are all assembled upon an occasion of charity. What a mixture of festivity and religion.

Liverpool Grand Musical Festival.

No former occasion ever excited so strong a public interest, or drew so many strangers to the “good old town,” as the festival which has so auspiciously concluded for the benefit of the public charities. For weeks previously, the managing committee and the magistracy conducted arrangements, on a most extensive scale, for the comfort and accommodation of those who might attend the entertainments. The town underwent a sort of renovation. Numbers of the old houses in Lord Street were razed to the ground with a rapidity that looked like magic, and a wide paved street, bounded by elegant piles of new houses, occupied their site. Amidst all this bustle and activity, the flags have fluttered from the church towers, the bells have tolled merry peals, and, what with oratorios, concerts, balls, plays, dinners, routs, and exhibitions,—beautiful or wonderful, the town has been held in a continued whirl of gaiety and pleasure. When it is considered that all the expenditure on the occasion conduces to the benefit of trade, by increasing the consumption of the products of industry, and giving employment to thousands, while the *profits* of the festivities are to be exclusively devoted to charitable purposes, and will for years alleviate the sufferings and brighten the destinies of the poor—to reprehend the innocent and refined amusements which have brought about such a con-

summation, would argue at once an absence of feeling and of philosophy.

TUESDAY.

Divine service was this day celebrated in the new and elegant church of St. Michael. The weather was as fine as a clear day in May, and the congregation began to collect at nine, though service did not commence till eleven. The Mayor and his retinue were present, and so great was the desire for admittance, that crowds of ladies and gentlemen filled considerable spaces outside the doors. The carriages reached from the Church to Cleveland-square, besides those in neighboring streets, so that they occupied a space half a mile in length. Never was there in a church in Liverpool so admirable a display of rich costume and fair faces. The vocal performers sung "Hosannah to the son of David," assisted by the Chorus singers.—The duet, "Hear my prayer," was afterwards sung by Miss Stephens and Mrs. W. Ruyvett. "Thou shalt show us wonderful things," was sung by Mr. Braham and Mr. Terrail. The Lord Bishop of the Diocese preached an excellent sermon; after which, Mr. Vaughan and Mr. Phillips sung beautifully the duet, "Here shall soft charity repair." After service silver plates were held at the doors by the Countess of Wilton, the Hon. Mrs. Stanley, the Dutchess of St. Albans, and other ladies of distinction, and the sum collected was £496.

The first concert took place in the evening at the amphitheatre, which was fitted up for the occasion. The house looked beautiful. The display of female elegance and splendid costume was admirable, and the performance went off with much eclat.

WEDNESDAY.

The Oratorio of the Creation was this day performed at St. Peter's Church. Here temporary galleries had been raised, and a gallery for the stewards, in the chancel, so as to accommodate as many auditors as possible. The whole was handsomely hung

with cloth, and the splendidly dressed assemblage had a most beautiful appearance.

So early as ten o'clock, Church street became crowded by expectant multitudes, who waited to witness the coming up of the carriages and the alighting of the gentry—chiefly at the north gate. The church was nearly filled long before the commencement of the performance, and all the streets in the neighbourhood were lined with carriages, and presented round the church a panoramic scene of gaiety and bustle.

THE BALLOON.

Now came the most beautiful part of the spectacle. The Balloon which for a time, seemed stationary over the sea, sailed slowly towards the spectators—at a great height. The sky was of the purest blue, and in the ruddy rays of the declining sun, the splendid globe shone like a ball of burnished gold. The ballast (sand) thrown out from time to time appeared, in the rays of the sun, like the fiery explosion of a squib, or like a streaky and thin cloud of gold. We observed, so great was the height of the balloon, that the ballast thus seen, seemed almost stationary in the air for some seconds—though it was rapidly descending. It passed the corner of Russel Street and Mount Pleasant, where some of the ballast fell: or, in other words, it became almost vertical to the spectators in the area—seeming to float over their heads. Glowing in the sun, it sailed slowly and majestically towards Woolton; and it was curious to observe the position of the spectators when it passed over them—their heads thrown back till their visages were horizontal. The spectacle was indeed a great deal too fine. The balloon was in sight until its descent near Wavertree, and so slow was its progress, that thousands of pedestrians, with a sprinkling of horsemen and *gigists*, hurried along the roads and lanes leading towards Woolton, the direction of which it took. The machine came down slow-

ly and majestically, and offered a sublime sight to hundreds who ran towards it.

State of things on this side the Atlantic.

[*From the N.Y. Telescope of Jan. 19.*]

RELIGIOUS BALL.

On the evening of the 3d of January, 1828, a religious ball was held in the village of Peekskill, (N. Y.) for the benefit of Rev. Mr. Ives, an Episcopal clergyman.—About \$28 in cash was received, and \$15 in presents, such as clothing, &c. Also \$5 for the fiddler. Fiddling, dancing, and card playing for the benefit of the worthy priest. L. C.

Effects of a more perfect revelation.

The following remarks by the Chief Justice of Calcutta, are deserving of an attentive consideration, and will be found as applicable to events that are yet to take place, as they are to such as are already past.

"It is an awful but unquestionable fact, that a fuller knowledge, a more perfect revelation of the will of God has never been communicated to mankind, without their being thrown into confusion. To some it has seemed that religion is so important an element of social order, that no alteration can be made of its quality and proportion, without the whole mass dissolving, fermenting, and assuming new forms; that by some mysterious condition of the lot of humanity, all mighty blessings are attended by some great evil, that every step to Heaven is even yet to be won by fresh sacrifices and atonements. There is another, and, I trust a better mode of reasoning on these symptoms, of interpreting these terrible signs; I will not readily believe that religion has been one of the causes of disorder; but rather that the vices of men having prepared the crisis, and called for the revulsion and reaction of the preservative principles of society, religion has only thus manifested herself, in a more visible and tangible form, and come as a ministering angel, to enable those who were struggling for

the right to persevere and to prevail. The appalling fact, however, remains not the less indisputable, that it is in scenes of extensive disorder, amidst mortal strife and terrible misery, that she has achieved her greatest triumphs, displayed her strongest powers, and made her most rapid advances. When Christianity first spread itself over the face of the Roman empire, all the powers of darkness seemed to be roused to an encounter. The storm blew from every point of the compass; unheard of races of men, and monsters of anarchy and misrule, more like the fantastic shapes of a dream than the realities of human life, appeared on the stage; and that period ensued which has been perhaps rightly considered, as the most calamitous in the whole history of man. Again—when in Europe the Church cast its old slough, and reappeared in somewhat of its pristine simplicity, the whole continent was convulsed by civil war for a century and a half. Let me not be misunderstood. I hold that there is no one who has rightly considered these events, who must not, even whilst he mourns over them, admit that it is better the changes took place even with their terrible accompaniments, than that they should not have taken place at all."

AN IMPORTANT DISTINCTION.

SELECTED.

There are religious feelings which rise to a certain point and then die away forever. There are convictions which make a man tremble, and are then drowned in the vortex of passion. There are anticipations of celestial blessedness, keen, bright and blissful to the soul, which are exchanged for the perturbations of sense, and for the delirium of the world. Such feelings, such convictions, such anticipations touched the imagination of Balaam as he pourtrayed the spiritual glories of Israel. But the world clung around his heart, and dragged him down to perdition! The man "whose eyes were

open," the man to whom the "visions of the Almighty" were vouchsafed, the man who instructed others in the estimation of *life*, himself practically chose *death*, and perished amidst the light which blazed upon his path! Oh, what is the value of knowledge without sentiment, what is religious impulse without sincerity and without love? It is the conversion of the heart to God, it is the choice of an infinite good in preference to transitory objects, it is the pursuit of holiness as the basis and superstructure of happiness, it is the conformity of the will to the immutable will of God—it is this, and this alone, which constitutes Religion! Dull wishes, feeble resolutions, indolent efforts, which end but in worldliness and vanity, a cold approbation of virtue, which mocks the heart even while it utters its applause, all this is delusion and death.

For the Reformer.

Extract from the *New York Spectator*,
Jan. 1, 1828.

"**NEW-YEAR OFFERINGS.**—It is with no common sensation of joy, that we learn that the Fancy Article Society, composed of the Ladies of the Collegiate Dutch Church in this city, commenced their sale of fancy articles, prepared by them, this morning at the Consistory Chamber,*** and will continue until all are sold. The proceeds of the sale to be applied in aid of the cause of missions. It must be gratifying to all the friends of missions to find so many casting their voluntary offerings as the labor of love, into the treasury of the Lord—that the hearts of the now destitute may be made to rejoice in receiving the word of life—(the Heidelberg Catechism, &c.) It is here an equivalent is offered to the purchaser, and his offering returns twice blessed.

A FRIEND OF MISSIONS."

REMARKS.

It would seem as if the clergy of this country and their admirers affect all kinds of (money making) shapes, and continually busy themselves in inventing new plans and contrivances to keep up an "*excitement*," in their favor, and place, what they call the *Laity*, at their feet.

That great point was gained by the ancient Jewish rulers, by keeping the people as close as possible to the *letter* of the law; and, to insure their obedience, they added new forms and ceremonies to their religion, and heaped new burdens on the shoulders of the public—("tything, mint, annise, and cummin.") The same object is pursued by the modern clergy—they too, by means of *creeds*, *confessions*, and *catechisms*, and appointment of *times*, *feasts*, *fasts*, *society-meetings*, and *what not*, have prostrated the human mind to a compliance with their *dogmas*, their *ceremonies*, their *objects*, and their *measures*, both in regard to temporals and spirituals—nay, they have gone so far as to imitate the very vices of their predecessors, as may be seen by the above recited *public document*. The Jewish priests countenanced "buyers and sellers," in, or about the sacred temple itself. The modern priests urge the laity to build costly "*Churches*" and "*Chambers*," which they consecrate with much *religious* pomp, and make *Auction Rooms* of them to sell, not "sheep and beeves," but fancy toys, trinkets, &c. things too childish to be enumerated in their puffing advertisement, and the money is to be cast into the "*Lord's treasury*"—and for what purpose? Why, to "educate and send forth" a set of lazy poor young men to make proselytes, not to the (*pretended*) owner of the Treasury,* but to the sect that sent them.

H. I.

Society of the "United Germans."

A society of common property, under the above name, has been lately formed at Teutonia, Columbiana Co. Ohio. There is every prospect that these people will soon become a flourishing and prosperous community. The society consists at present of industrious and conscientious Germans, or those of German extraction, many

* Is not the freedom they thus take, "blaspheming that worthy Name."

of whom have lately left Mr. Rapp's establishment at Economy, on account of the rigid and aristocratical management of Mr. Rapp, who it seems holds all the property in his own hands, and treats the people under him more like slaves and vassals than equals. Jacob Schreiber, a member of the new community, and whose father gave to Mr. Rapp's establishment upwards of *ten thousand dollars*, was Mr. Rapp's first workman in the carpenter and machine business, and faithfully labored for Mr. Rapp in those useful occupations about twenty years. Yet when compelled, from more enlightened views of the rights of man, to leave the concern, he could only obtain the offer (as a *free gift* not a *debt*) of 150 dollars. He refused the pittance, and lately petitioned the legislature of this state for a redress of his wrongs. The committee to whom the petition was referred made a report on the case, but matters had been so managed by Mr. Rapp or his advisers, that the legislature could give no relief. From information it is not likely that Mr. Rapp will be able much longer to keep his community together under such management as he now exercises; and it is not a little surprising that he has contrived to do it so long.

We have room only for a part of the Constitution of the 'United Germans,' but wish the society all possible success. It is their intention shortly to issue a half weekly paper, both in German and English, at two dollars a year. Letters at present, on the subject, are to be addressed to Petersburg, Columbiana County, Ohio, and the postage must be paid.

[*From the Constitution.*]

"In order to guard the primitive rights of man—Liberty and Equality—as much as possible, in all our institutions, we engage to stand one for all, and all for one, and never to allow or permit, that any wrong should be done to any member of our association by one or more of us. To this end, we hereby make the following declarations and resolutions.

Art. 1. There shall be no arrangement made or introduced amongst us, which may be in any wise contradictory to the Constitution of the United States, the laws of the country, or the precepts of the Gospel.

Art. 2. Since we find that not only the primitive christians have lived in a perfect community of goods, in order to free themselves from earthly cares, and to strive the better after things eternal; but also, that such a community of goods offers the most important advantages to the forming and unfolding of our intellectual and physical powers: Therefore we will introduce this order again amongst ourselves, in such a manner as the following articles shall more distinctly determine.

Art. 3. We unite *pro primo* for ten years with each other, on the following principles: Every member, who joins with us, puts his whole property, or only a part of it, as he thinks proper, into the common stock. The property may consist of money, land, grain, cattle, house furniture, store-goods or any other valuable articles, which will be accepted on the following terms: The proprietor chooses nine or more impartial men, who, with his consent, determine the value of the articles, and according to this valuation the society accepts of the property, and promises to restore the same to its proprietor, after the lapse of ten years, in case he should demand it, together with a proportionate part of the acquired profits.

Art. 4. Should any member feel inclined to leave the society before the expiration of the said ten years, then the society must, if they should not be able immediately to restore to the member his whole property, at least try to promote the views and purposes of such member, as it may agree with their philanthropic principles and objects.

Art. 5. Since we seek not earthly riches, but only the kingdom of God and his righteousness, the poorest member will be just as acceptable and welcome to us as the richest; assured

that God will always bless and provide for our association, as He has provided graciously and kindly for us until now; as we may be able always to earn as much with the work of our hands and our minds, as is necessary to our maintenance and living.

Art. 6. The surplus which God may bestow on us by our own labor, or by the joining of wealthy brethren, we would by no means use for earthly luxuries, but entirely for charitable and philanthropic ends—among which the following are the most prominent:

The establishment of good schools and institutions of education, for our own children, as well as for those of others. Into these institutions we will receive poor orphans, and the children of the poor and indigent, without distinction of language, country, nation or color, entirely gratis, and give them not only all the necessaries of life, but also instruct them in every useful occupation and knowledge. The children of the more wealthy, shall, on reasonable terms, be instructed in every branch which their parents may deem proper for their future destination."

American Sunday School Union.

A paper entitled "*The Mechanics' Free Press*," has lately been issued in this city, which promises to be a useful publication. A writer in the first number of this paper, after mentioning a remonstrance against granting an act of incorporation for the *Sunday School Union*, observes:

"It is satisfactory to discover that there are many in community who can foresee the pernicious consequences of affording to such institutions as the *Sunday School Union*, the means of acquiring power. The *Sunday School Union* appears to me to be an institution from which danger may be apprehended. Its resources must become vastly extensive and its influence incalculably great. Its operations will require a large number of the working classes, who, it is to be feared, may

be moulded to suit the views of those whose aim is power and aggrandizement.—Those therefore who are engaged in mechanical pursuits, ought to be particularly jealous of institutions which may oppress any of the manufacturing community. Besides, one or two religious sects appear to desire a monopoly of the benefits of this institution, to the exclusion of all others. This, to say the least, is a suspicious circumstance, when it is known that they are the most powerful and popular sects of the country—and one of the most zealous advocates of this institution, on being asked what will become of the numerous clergymen who are now educating in the country, from the greatness of their number, replied, the government will ultimately have to support them. Such sentiments, in connection with the reaching for power of the present day, should cause alarm, and induce every man who values the rights which are guaranteed to him by the constitution of his country, to watch them with a jealous eye.

"Clerical power comes in like a thief in the darkness of midnight—its march is quiet and cautious, until opportunity is acquired, and then it stalks forth like a pestilence, scattering destruction every where around.

"I may be too suspicious of matters and things, but the view I have given the subject of chartering the *Sunday School Union* has caused these apprehensions."

Another "National Society."

A "National Bible-Class Society" has lately been formed in this city, principally by "Reverend's" and "D. D.'s" of the Presbyterian order. "Its objects are," in the words of the constitution, "to collect and disseminate knowledge concerning Bible Classes, where they exist, how they are conducted, and what advantages have resulted from them; to devise and execute measures to promote the organization and prosperity of Bible Classes among all denominations throughout

the land, and to correspond and co-operate with any kindred institution which may be formed in any part of the world." [A wide range. We next come to the money part.] "The payment of \$1 annually, or of \$20 at one time, constitutes a member. The payment of \$50, an honorary Director for life; and \$100, a patron. A minister may become an honorary Director by the payment of \$30. There are ten Vice Presidents, and a Board of Managers, 31 in number, belonging to the Society."

These Bible-Classes may be made another powerful engine not only for raising money but also for promoting orthodoxy in the land. The number of "National Societies," now formed in this country, all principally got up and managed by the Presbyterians, are among the "signs of the times" which every one should endeavor to discern. We have said enough on these subjects to awaken attention in all those who are friends to liberty and the rights of conscience, and shall probably say less hereafter. But we are sorry to see the coldness and apathy which prevails in matters of so much importance; and above all, the confident belief entertained by most, that our religious liberties are established on a foundation *not to be removed*, which more than any thing else must pave the way, and indeed seems a prelude, to their overthrow.

JEALOUSY MANIFESTED.

The New York Baptist Register has the following query; "If the Agents of the 'American Tract Society,' and 'American Sunday School Union,' are permitted to spend any time they think proper, in endeavoring to make disciples to *their* faith, ought there not to be an equal number appointed from each denomination composing these Associations?"

Baptists, Methodists, and all other denominations in this country will understand things better than they now do in the winding up of the concern.

If they do not in the end have to strike their colours and surrender their rights to a Presbyterian Hierarchy, something quite unexpected must take place or the editor of this paper has made wrong calculations. To give all the reasons for this once apparently impossible, but now more than probable event, would require more space than we can spare, and besides we have almost concluded to say but little more on this subject, since so many are disposed to view things in the most favourable light and no sense of our danger can be imposed on their minds. It is at best a thankless task, as it ever has been, to prophecy *evil things*, and if no good is likely to arise from it, why should it not be foreborne? The thousands of societies in this country under the management of the Presbyterian clergy, and the fifteen or twenty Theological Seminaries now in operation for producing innumerable other teachers of the same stamp—all of whom will have their influence in society—are among the reasons that might be presented for the fears we entertain, as they furnish a criterion by which we may judge concerning their future progress and final success. If one man has five manufactories and another has twenty on a much larger scale, it is easy to calculate which of the two will shortly have the most goods. Now, the Presbyterians and their New England brethren have nearly all the manufactories for making ministers that are in the land, and when they have proceeded in the business a while longer, and can then persuade the people that no preachers are of the right stamp but such as are made at their establishments, the business is done, and all other manufactories and their supporters will go down or rather be put down.

The American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions has now 1317 Associations belonging to it, from which was contributed during the last year nearly 44,000 dolls. A number of

additional agents have been employed "to organize new associations and auxiliaries, or to visit and encourage those which have heretofore been organized." "It is expected," says the Board, "that during the present year, a sufficient number of agents will be obtainable to visit many of the Auxiliaries in New-England, and considerably to extend the organization of Associations in New York and other Middle States." The amount of receipts to this Society during the last year is stated to be 88,341 dollars. The next annual meeting of this body is to be held in Philadelphia on the 1st Wednesday of October, 1828.

BENEVOLENT SOCIETIES—*so called.*

From a statement in the New York Tract Magazine it appears that the money received during the past year, by only fifteen of what are called benevolent societies in this country, amounted to 356,163 dollars 55 cents. A sum greater than was received by all the Apostles, Evangelists and preachers, for more than 300 years after the coming of Christ—while they extended the knowledge of the Gospel to the remotest parts, and brought tens and hundreds of thousands into obedience to its holy requirements. But their dependence, unlike that of modern professors, was not on the *aid of money*, but on the *power of God.*

NORTH CAROLINA BAPTISTS.

We give below a few extracts from a letter lately received from North Carolina, to enable our readers to see what some of our opposers and the friends of missions in that part of the country say of us, after their signal defeat.

"Travelling a short distance from home, I met a friend in society of influence and standing, who, after the first introduction was over, commenced with me the following dialogue:

"Why brother, they tell me that you take the Reformer, that odious paper?"

"I do," was the reply.

"I am surprised to think you would countenance such a publication!"

"Why so brother, I am fond of it—it affords light?"

"O! dear me brother—it cannot possibly be—it is quite to the reverse, for it is evident it strikes at the foundation of vital religion."

"For shame, I am equally surprised at you to make such an assertion. I defy you or any other person, to produce or point out a word or sentence that can possibly have that fatal tendency."

"Why, I have just come from Philadelphia, and have got the Editor's full character—he is not worthy of notice—and if I were you I would take his paper no longer."

"I am confident brother, that you cannot prove your first assail good, and what may I think of the latter. Do you suppose he can be worse aspersed than Paul was. What you have said goes to confirm me more in the propriety of encouraging the publication, and I mean to have it as long as I can."

"I have heard of another person who has expressed himself in a similar way with regard to the Reformer, and is very industrious in making it appear in the most odious light. Both of these men are great advocates for all the religious inventions of modern days."

It seems the want of success among friends of modern Missions in North Carolina has aroused up all their faculties to assail such as expose their schemes. If no one regarded their opposition and what they can say more than the Editor of this paper, the tranquillity of no person would be disturbed. That being who knows all things, and for whose cause we are willing to endure reproach, is a sufficient defence.

Persecution is one of those blessings which Christ has promised to all those who have forsaken all for his sake. It is what all have suffered that have been faithful in every age of the

world. Its tendency is to separate the *precious* from the *vile*, and those rightly exercised under it, find it among the greatest blessings bestowed upon the followers of Christ.

CHOCTAW MISSIONS.

The following communication is entitled to additional interest, from the circumstance of its being written by a person residing near a Missionary station in the Choctaw Nation.

For the Reformer.

Most important undertakings are apt to excite some diversity of opinion. Thus it is with the Choctaw Mission, some approve, some disapprove; or think it a mere speculation. I have had my doubts as regards the conversion of these, our red folks, to christianity at this time. Paul and his companions, "after they were come to Mysia, they essayed to go to Bithynia: but the Spirit suffered them not." "They came down to Troas, and a vision appeared to Paul in the night; there stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him saying, Come over into Macedonia, and help us." Under such impressions, they could go without any pecuniary aid, coveting no man's silver or gold. "Assuredly gathering they were called;" and relying on the great missionary promise, "Lo I am with you."

The establishment of schools among the Choctaws, may probably be one of the speediest means of introducing the arts of agriculture and civilization. I would be very far from opposing any thing that would tend to their improvement; nevertheless, the Rechabites of old were commended, in that they followed the command of their father, not to build houses, plant vineyards, or drink wine. Thus our Indian neighbours live peaceably in their tents, having cattle and other stock, and good range. "With his dog and gun," he gains his pittance, or competence—and is not harrassed with so many earth-born cares. "Man wants but little here below, nor wants that little

long." In all our dealings with them we should endeavor to inculcate principles of honesty, and morality, as the best policy, and means of improving their condition.* Were they to be bred up to, and taught all the external rites of religion, this would not advance them one step towards the kingdom of heaven. But some say it will save them from their idolatry and superstition. It might change them from one idol to another. They might not have idols of wood or stone set up in their tents, or nation, (which is not the case now;) but they might have the idol money set up in their hearts, the love of which is the root of all evil, and covetousness, which is idolatry; not indeed as gross as image worship, but little less impious. As to their superstition, they probably have as little of it as we. Who knows the exercises of mind of a poor Indian? Can he not "see God in clouds, or hear him in wind?" And may he not be found of God, like the Gentiles of old.

Teaching the Indians all the external observances of christianity, without the "Power of godliness," would do them as little good, as it did the foolish virgins we read of, or those that had prophesied in the name of Christ, and done many wonderful works. By nature, it must be allowed that they (the Indians) are as good as we. Circumstances then have made some small difference. We have the oracles of truth; let us then give heed, lest it be said of us, "Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." Let us show them examples of honesty and christianity in our dealings with them, not coveting their land, or their oxen, or other property, that they may be induced to say, like the converts of old, (when they took hold of the skirts of him that was a Jew) saying, "We will go with thee, for we perceive that

* The Indians come over every fall and pick out much cotton for us;—we are sorry to hear complaints of unfair dealings towards them, which sometimes happen.

the Lord is with thee." But when they see so much pride, and covetousness, and intemperance, in the land that is called christian, will they not view christianity as a root out of dry ground, without form or comeliness, that they should desire it.

To digress a little. It appears that too much dependence is put in an arm of flesh; as if indeed the kingdom of heaven might be obtained with money. See the many Tract Societies, Missionary productions, prize essays, &c. &c. The press seems almost to groan under the toil, insomuch, that one can scarcely forbear saying like the ancient Prophet, "Bel boweth down, Nebo stoopeth." (Isa. 46. i.) We read, that the Lord's own arm shall rule for him, and that the government shall be on his shoulders. He seeth not as man seeth; man may prepare the head, but the preparation of the heart is from the Lord. Zeal may carry men a great way; it is often the bright day that breeds the foul one; man is prone to evil. In the first christian era, the prevailing light of the Gospel induced the heathen to leave their temples useless and forsaken, for "this Paul hath persuaded and turned away much people, saying that they be no gods, which are made with hands." A heathen writer, speaking of those times, said christianity had nearly eaten out their religion. We hope it may never be said of us, that our religion, after the rudiments of this world, has eaten out our christianity.

MISSISSIPPIAN.

AMERICAN INDIANS.

A writer in the Boston Recorder & Telegraph, speaking of the *present condition* of the American Indians, says:

"One general remark will be found almost universally applicable, viz: that just in proportion to the intimacy of their intercourse with the whites, and the length of time it has continued, they are vicious and degraded. Those Indians who see the fewest whites are generally in much

the best situation, in a civil, intellectual, and moral point of view."

This is an admission quite unexpected, in a paper as much devoted to the cause of missions as the Recorder and Telegraph. It is however strictly true.

"*The Christian Warrior.*"—A weekly pamphlet with this title is about to be published in this city, conducted by persons of the "Evangelical" portion of the Episcopal Church. The Editor says, "the perfect propriety of the name will be manifest to the reader of the first number." We understand, indeed, that it is to be an open declaration of war with Bishop Hobart, and the High Church party, "to be waged weekly with virulent constancy."

This striving and dashing together of the potsherds of the earth, or corrupt religious parties, is a matter of congratulation with the enlightened and truly pious; for these Babels of men must necessarily all be brought to naught, before the kingdom of Christ and of righteousness, can prevail on the earth: and such collisions, next to the immediate power of God, are the best calculated to accomplish their downfall. For though true christians, or persons of sincerity and righteousness, may exist and prosper with much diversity of sentiment and opposition one to another, being actuated by principle—not so with corrupt men; disunion and opposition is a prelude to their downfall and destruction. Said the Saviour, if Satan's kingdom be divided it cannot stand. Hence we are told by Milton that the "devils firm concord hold."

Extract of a letter from a subscriber in Middlesex Co. Con.

"I can perceive that what is held forth in your work is fast fulfilling. The different sects in this part of the country are dividing and scattering, and I hope that a complete annihilation of the whole troop will soon take place and make way for truth and righteousness."

If such things are going on in the "land of steady habits," where priestcraft has so

long bore sway, the inquiry may well be made, "*Watchmen, what of the night?*" We certainly live in an eventful period; but nothing has yet taken place in comparison to what is to be, for the Apostle tells us the Lord will yet once more shake not the earth only, but also heaven, and that there will be a removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which cannot be shaken may remain. This great shaking time, so necessary for the good of mankind, has hardly yet commenced.—There shall not be left one sectarian building, not one stone upon another of any sectarian work or device in matters of religion, that shall not be thrown down; and all that is wrong, and all that is unjust, and all that is against purity and love shall be removed.

Therefore let every one take heed what he builds. Look at the buildings already erected and erecting. Look at the creeds and confessions, the rules and ceremonies, the forms and observances now existing, and see the strife and contention, the zeal and bitterness employed in their defence, while the principles of honesty, integrity, and fellow-feeling are trampled in the dust. These things are fast preparing us and ripening us for the sickle of divine justice, to be employed on us to gather us for the wine-press, and for the great battle of Armageddon. But before this event can take place, three unclean spirits like frogs will come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet—being the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. This period is fast approaching, if it has not already dawned. Every effort is making by innumerable societies, and innumerable plans made by sectarian leaders to draw the great men of the earth, and persons of no religious principles, into the ranks of corrupted Christianity. These, combined with others, and all of no religious or restraining principles, will form an immense body, an innumerable army that will attempt to crush the dawning and advances of light and truth, or all that act under their influence, and sufferings deep and trying will be endured. But they will be of limited duration, and truth and righteousness will prevail over falsehood and oppression; for the beast and the false prophet will be taken, and the remnant slain, and then will be fulfilled what is foretold in Daniel, that the

saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom and possess it for ever and ever.

We should have said more on some subjects than we have heretofore done, were it not that we have felt an unwillingness to impose our peculiar views on others in this work, which was more particularly designed to show the fallen and corrupt condition of professing Christendom, that they might seek a reformation from it; for it is the very first step to an amendment to see that we are wrong. We have laboured sincerely and conscientiously in this cause without any prospect to get gain, and we have the reward of peace in our own minds. What lies before us we know not. It is our sincere desire to be led aright. The evidence of a pure intention we shall endeavour ever to preserve. It has long been a fixed and governing principle to act with sincerity and integrity, and from the great advantages of so acting, we desire that all may act from the same principles. Our labour would then be accomplished, and we should see a great change for the better in this now troublesome and contentious world—of suing and being sued—of cheating and being cheated—and doing something almost continually to the injury of another's peace and the loss of our own.

SPIRIT OF THE AGE.

[The following exhibition of the spirit of the age, is given by John Randolph, of Virginia, in a late speech before Congress.]

"A spirit has lately gone abroad in England and here—it is raging in England as much as fanaticism did in the time of the covenant and the round heads: it is raging here—he wished he could say it did not exist in Virginia—it is the spirit of neglecting your own affairs to administer to those of your neighbours—it is the spirit which takes the plodder from the plough to make him a plodder in the pulpit; which takes the shoemaker from the last, and the mother from the fire-side and her children to exhibit in a Church, which is as much a Theatre on these occasions as the Grand Opera in Paris and London. If he could speak French or Latin here without being misquoted, he would call it the seat of *ennui*."

*** The Circular of Mr. B. will be attended to in our next.

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